

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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EXDIS, SPECAT EXCLUSIVE FOR SECRETARY HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS:PDIP, EGEN, US,LA,CB,VM

SUBJECT: EA/VLC WEEKLY STATUS REPORT NO.4
MILITARY ADRESSES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

1. REGIONAL: VIETNAM-CAMBODIA BORDER FIGHTING (SECRET)

SINCE DECEMBER 24 THE PRESS HAS FOCUSED ON MAJOR
FIGHTING BETWEEN THE KHMER AND VIETNAMESE IN THE PARROTS
BEAK. CBS NEWS BRIEFLY COVERED THE STORY AND NEWSWEEK
PLANS AN ARTICLE FOR ITS FORTHCOMING ISSUE. OTHER JOURNA-
LISTS (INCLUDING TAD SZULC AND MURREY MARDER) HAVE
APPROACHED THE DEPARTMENT FOR BACKGROUND AS WELL. FROM
BANGKOK AP AND REUTERS USED "DIPLOMATIC SOURCES" AND AP IN
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WASHINGTON QUOTED UNNAMED "STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS" TO
THE EFFECT THAT THE LARGE-SCALE FIGHTING "DID NOT CONCERN
US ANYMORE." AFP BANGKOK'S ACCOUNT PROVIDES THE MOST
DETAIL INCLUDING VIETNAMESE UNIT IDENTIFICATIONS
AND SUPPORTING HEAVY ARMS (RECENT CLANDESTINE REPORTING
SUPPORTS MANY OF THESE DETAILS). WE HAVE NO NEW HARD
INFORMATION ON THE AFTERMATH OF THE EARLY DECEMBER

VIETNAMESE ATTACK.

FOREIGN MINISTER TRINH'S TRAVELS (CONFIDENTIAL)

NGUYEN DUY TRINH LAUNCHED HIS TOUR OF SOUTHEAST ASIA FROM VIENTIANE WHERE HE SPENT DECEMBER 26-28. WE SUSPECT DECEMBER 17-21 TRIP TO CAMBODIA AND NOTE THAT THEIR JOINT COMMUNIQUE INCLUDED A REITERATION OF EARLIER-STATED INTENTIONS TO STRENGTHEN MUTUAL ASSISTANCE, COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY WITH CAMBODIA.

TRINH ARRIVED IN JAKARTA DECEMBER 28 AND LEAVES DECEMBER 31. HE WILL VISIT KUALA LUMPUR JANUARY 3-6 AND GO ON TO BANGKOK JANUARY 9-12. HIS MANILA STOP OVERLAPS WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE'S WHICH WILL DOUBTLESS GENERATE SOME PRESS SPECULATION, AS MAY THE TWO-DAY HOLE IN TRINH'S SCHEDULE.

2. VIETNAM: U.S. DOMESTIC PRESSURE FOR FOOD AID AS DISASTER ASSISTANCE (UNCLAS)

CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS HAVE JOINED A CAMPAIGN TO URGE THE ADMINISTRATION TO SEND FOOD AID TO VIETNAM AND LAOS. SIXTY-FOUR RELIGIOUS, VOLUNTARY OR HUMANITARIAN AGENCY LEADERS, MOST ACTING FOR THEIR ORGANIZATIONS, HAVE APPEALED TO THE PRESIDENT TO SEND FOOD TO VIETNAM AS DISASTER
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ASSISTANCE (WHICH AID CONSIDERS EXEMPT FROM OTHER LEGAL PROHIBITIONS ON FOOD AID). THEY ALSO ASKED LIFTING OF THE TRADE EMBARGO FOR FOOD SALES AND URGED PL-480 FOOD AID TO LAOS. SENATOR KENNEDY RELEASED A SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE REPORT BACKING-UP THIS POSITION, AS PART OF A DISCUSSION ON RECONCILIATION AND NORMALIZATION WITH VIETNAM THE REPORT ALSO COVERED REFUGEE PROBLEMS. SENATOR HUMPHREY AND AT LEAST 20 COLLEAGUES PLAN TO WRITE THE PRESIDENT TO SEND FOOD AND ARE LOOKING FOR MORE SIGNATURES. CONGRESSMEN BINGHAM AND FRASER HAVE ALREADY WRITTEN.

VLC HAS BEEN TASKED WITH A DIRECT REPLY TO THE MULTI-ORGANIZATION LETTER AND HAS RECEIVED AID CLEARANCES ON LANGUAGE TURNING THE APPEAL DOWN "AT THIS TIME" AFTER "WE CAREFULLY EXAMINED THE FACTS, INCLUDING THE OVERALL FOOD SITUATION IN VIETNAM AND THE CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDE, IN THE LIGHT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY." WE ARE NOTING THAT FOOD AID TO LAOS, WHERE THE SITUATION HAS AMELIORATED BUT IS STILL SERIOUS, IS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SRV MEDIA SINCE THE DECEMBER 19-20 TALKS (UNCLAS)

ALTHOUGH VIETNAMESE MEDIA HAVE LIMITED DIRECT COMMENTARY ON THE DECEMBER 19-20 TALKS TO TWO LOW-KEY REPORTS BASED ON AGREED LANGUAGE FROM THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE, THEY HAVE CONTINUED TO CRITICIZE THE ADMINISTRATION IN OTHER AREAS. IN A DECEMBER 23 BROADCAST, RADIO HANOI WARNED THAT THE U.S. IS STILL PURSUING AN "IMPERIALIST STRATEGY" AND THAT HUMAN RIGHTS IS MERELY A TACTIC TO DIVIDE THE SOCIALIST WORLD. THE BROADCAST ALSO CRITICIZED THE U.S.

FOR ITS FAILURE TO HONOR ITS OBLIGATION TO HELP HEAL THE WOUNDS OF WAR. EARLIER IN THE MONTH RADIO HANOI NOTED THAT 62 AMERICAN NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS HAD URGED THE ADMINISTRATION TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY FOOD AID TO VIETNAM AND LAOS. OTHER BROADCASTS SINCE THE TALKS CRITICIZED
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PRESIDENT CARTER'S DECEMBER-JANUARY TRIP, ANALYZED THE U.S. "DECLINE" IN ASIA AND ITS LABOR PROBLEMS AND BLAMED THE U.S. FOR THE ARMS RACE.

3. CAMBODIA: A SURPRISE VISIT (UNCLAS)

KAMPUCHEA CONTINUED ITS EMERGENCE INTO INTERNATIONAL LIFE DECEMBER 27 AS PRO-PEKING COMRADE HILL, CHAIRMAN OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST AUSTRALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY LED A DELEGATION TO PHNOM PENH. THE VISIT MARKS A FURTHER STEP INTO THE INTERNATIONAL CIRCLE OF FRATERNAL PARTIES THE KHMER JOINED WHEN THE PARTY REVEALED ITSELF IN SEPTEMBER AND PROVIDES BALANCE BETWEEN PEKING AND HANOI IN THE WAKE OF THE RECENT LAO PARTY AND GOVERNMENT VISIT. THE TRIP ALSO MAINTAINS SYMMETRY BETWEEN PARTY RELATIONS AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, BALANCING THE RECENT TOUR OF ANGKOR WAT BY SWEDEN'S AMBASSADOR TO BANGKOK.
CHRISTOPHER

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